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ABSTRACT

Five papers dealing with social and institutional changes in special education have been selected from those presented at the CEC Northwest Regional Conference (Vancouver, British Columbia, October 23-24, 1970). Samuel Laycock discusses the importance of self concept in the development of exceptional children while Samuel Hamcroft comments upon alienation for all children of school failure, exclusion, and discrimination. M. Stephen Lilly examines apathy as applied to special education. The challenge of institutional change is delineated by Maynard Reynolds, while Ronald Jones comments upon the social revolution and special education. Other collections from the conference are available as EC 031 525 (Pre and Inservice Teacher Training), EC 031 527 (Administrative Procedures and Program Organization), EC 031 528 (Involvement of Parents in School Programs), and EC 031 529 (Teaching Strategies, Methods, and Instructional Materials). (CD)

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Exceptional Children Conference Papers: Social and Institutional Changes in Special Education

Papers Presented at the
Northwest Regional Conference
The Council for Exceptional Children
Vancouver, British Columbia
October 21-24, 1970

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Preface

Social and Institutional Changes in Special Education is a collection of 5 papers selected from those presented at the CEC Northwest Regional Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, October 23-28, 1972. These papers were collected and compiled by The Council for Exceptional Children, Arlington, Virginia. Other collections of papers from the conference have been compiled and are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Other collections announced in this issue of Research in Education may be found by consulting the Institution Index under Council for Exceptional Children or the Subject Index under Exceptional Child Education. Titles of these other collections are:

Involvement of Parents in School Programs
Pre- and Inservice Teacher Training
Administrative Procedures and Program Organization
Teaching Strategies, Methods, and Instructional Materials

Table of Contents

The Human Factor in the Development of Exceptional Children 5
Samuel B. Laycock, Dean Emeritus of Education, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Prevention for all Children of School Failure, Exclusion, and Disorientation... 16
Samuel C. Ashcroft, President, The Council for Exceptional Children, and Professor, Department of Special Education, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee

Synergy for What? 29
W. Stephen Lilly, Research Coordinator, Northwest Regional Special Education Instructional Materials Center (NWREIMC), University of Oregon, Eugene

Problems and Policies: The Challenge of Institutional Change 50
Maynard C. Reynolds, Chairman, Department of Special Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

The Social Revolution and Special Education 59
Ronald E. Jones, Director of Education, The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, Ontario

The Human Factor in the Development of Exceptional Children

S.A. Laycock
University of Saskatchewan

Last April when I received the J.E. Wallace Wallin Award in Chicago at the Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children, I made a two-minute speech - the shortest speech of my career. In it I suggested to the student-members and the other younger members of C.E.C. that their chief job in the remaining years of this century was to work out an effective partnership between the use of the latest technological knowledge and the best available data on the role of the human factor in the development of exceptional youngsters, that is, in other words, a reasonable balance between the human and the technological factors. Tonight I wish to pursue this topic further and to discuss with you "The Human Factor in the Development of Exceptional Children". Actually, what I have to say might well be expressed in the language of the Long Distance telephone message and given the title, "The Development of Exceptional Children - A Person-to-Person Call, Not a Station-to-Station Call.

Rollo May, in his book, Love and Will, which was a non-fiction best seller for some weeks earlier this year, points out that the overemphasis of the technological revolution has resulted, in our day, in a sense of emptiness, depersonalization, and alienation. These characteristics lead to apathy which, in turn, leads to violence. These feelings of alienation and depersonalization are probably important factors in the unrest and protests of university students, in racial conflict, in strife on the labor front, in the revulsion towards war, and in the cheapening and banalization of sex as portrayed in the Playboy philosophy and in many of the current novels and movies. It is also seen in the weakening of the influence of the established churches and the rise of new sects and semi-religious philosophies.

Importance of the Self-Concept

Fortunately, in psychology and education, there has been developing an increasing awareness of the importance of the self-concept. There has also been an increase in research concerning the relationship of an individual's self-image to both his achievement and his adjustment.

As a result of the above, there has been an increasing emphasis on the development of the pupils' self-concepts as a major goal of the school. In a report of a recent study made by a colleague and myself of the Educational Needs of Emotionally Disturbed Children in the Schools of British Columbia, we listed as four goals for the school, the development of: (1) a wholesome self-concept; (2) the ability to achieve effective interpersonal relationships; (3) achievement of school competence in academic and vocational skills, and (4) responsible social behavior. Certainly there is considerable evidence that pupils are unlikely to achieve school competence if they do not have a healthy self-concept or are unable to have effective relationships with peers and adults.

The importance of the self-concept, that is, how a person feels about himself, is not a new idea. It has deep roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions in the commandment - "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". The last phrase of that commandment escapes most people. Certainly, if a person feels anxious, insecure, and inadequate, his energy and effort are likely to be directed towards building up his own tattering and wobbly self so that he has no time or energy left for helping his neighbour.

The child's self-image or self-concept is dependent on two major factors: (1) his sense of security - that is the degree to which he feels loved and cherished by his parents and the extent to which he feels valued by his teachers and other significant adults as well as the nature of his status in the eyes of his peers. (2) The second factor in a child's self-concept results from his own feeling of adequacy - that is the extent to which he feels able to tackle the daily tasks of living at home, at school and on the playground, especially the developmental tasks which he faces at his particular stage of development. In the case of exceptional children, including both the handicapped and the gifted, we need to take a long searching look at how their self-concepts are affected by the attitudes they encounter and the degree of success they attain at home, on the playground, and at school.

Research data on the relationships between a child's self-concept and his school achievement are increasingly available. As an introduction to his 1970 book, Self-Concept and School Achievement, William W. Purkey, uses a story of Lowry, called "The Mouse and Henry Carson". This story describes how a mouse ran into the office of the Educational Testing Bureau and accidentally triggered a delicate point in the apparatus just as the College Entrance Examination Board's data on one Henry Carson was being scored.

Henry was an average high school student who was unsure of himself and his abilities. Had it not been for the mouse, Henry's scores would have been average or less, but the mouse changed all that, for the scores that emerged from the computer were amazing - very high on both the verbal and quantitative areas.

When the word reached Henry's school, news of his giftedness spread like wildfire. Teachers began to re-evaluate their gross underestimation of this fine lad, counsellors trembled at the thought of neglecting such talent and college administrators began to recruit Henry for their schools.

New worlds opened for Henry and as they opened, he started to grow as a person and as a student. Once he became aware of his potentialities and began to be treated differently by the significant people in his life, a self-fulfilling prophecy took place. Henry gained in confidence and began to put his mind to the way of great things. Leary ends his story by saying that Henry became one of the best men of his generation.

This story is not as fantastic as it appears. In his book, Purkey goes on to summarize the research evidence through 1969 as to how a child's self-concept can affect his school achievement. He cites an impressive array of studies to show that this is true at every grade level and that the successful student has, in general, positive self-concepts with feelings of worth while the unsuccessful student, whether an underachiever, a non-achiever or a poor reader has negative attitudes of himself and his abilities.

Many of you are familiar with the 1968 book by Rosenthal and Jacobson - Pygmalion in the Classroom - in which a large group of elementary school youngsters, who had been give a Test of Intellectual Blooming were divided randomly into two groups. Teachers of group A were told that their pupils had done very well in the test and that they could expect them to blossom out. The teachers of group B were not told the results of the test taken by their pupils. Both groups were retested after one-semester, one-year and two-year intervals. It was found that pupils in group A whose teachers had been told they could expect good things from them did significantly better than the pupils of group B whose teachers had not been led to expect good progress. Apparently teachers' expectations are self-fulfilling prophecies.

Moreover, Rosenthal and Jacobson describe an experiment with rats in which the experimenters' expectations were also self-fulfilling prophecies. A

group of rats was divided at random into two smaller groups. In the case of group A rats, the experimenters were told that these had high I.Q.'s and were quick learners whereas, with the group B rats the experimenters were told that these had low rat I.Q.'s and were slow learners. Both groups were tested in learning to thread a maze and it was found that group A rats, whose experimenters thought they were quick learners did, in fact, do significantly better than the group B rats who had been designated beforehand as slow learners. Apparently, even with animals the experimenter's expectations and consequent attitudes made a difference.

In a chapter in a 1970 book, The Unstudied Curriculum, Rosenthal brings up to date through 1965, the available evidence that teachers' expectations are self-fulfilling prophecies. He points out that it is difficult for a child whose measured I.Q. is low to be seen by his teacher as a potentially successful child intellectually or even as a well-adjusted child. Indeed, in one reported study, it was found that where the teacher had been told that a group of pupils would do poorly and some actually did well, the teacher resented this and played down the youngsters' success.

Also in The Unstudied Curriculum, Rosenthal cites 59 laboratory and 13 school studies which have been concerned with the problem of the extent of experimenters' and teachers' expectations with regard to learning by children and animals. He concluded that about seven out of ten experimenters and teachers can be expected to show the effects of their expectations on the performance of their subjects or pupils.

Still further evidence of the effect of attitudes on the part of teachers and other professionals is found in the work of Combs of the University of Florida. In studies of the helping professions, Combs found that effective teachers, counsellors and Episcopal priests exhibited three common characteristics: (1) They perceived themselves as reasonably secure and adequate; (2) they perceived their pupils or counsellees as able and worthy; (3) they perceived their job as one of freeing potentialities rather than one of controlling behavior.

I would like to emphasize Combs's last two characteristics. The first of these is the belief that the child is able and worthy. I know little about remedial reading but I have long been interested in observing remedial reading teachers who, in spite of different and often opposing methods, nonetheless get good results. I have a strong suspicion that, whatever the merits of the method used, the fact that these teachers were able to give the defeated and ticked youngsters the confidence that they could learn to read was a significant factor in their success.

Other evidence is provided by Spaulding in a study published in the 1968 edition of Standler's Readings in Child Behavior and Development. Spaulding found that the type of emotional interaction between pupils and their teacher affected the pupils' self-concepts and their school achievement. Pupils' self-esteem and achievement were raised when the teacher had a warm supportive attitude, and were adversely affected when the teacher was dominating or threatening or taught in a formal fashion emphasizing knowledge as such.

Spaulding's results bring us back to Combs' third characteristic of effective teachers and counsellors - that they perceived their job as one of freeing rather than controlling. If teachers really accepted that, we could have a complete educational revolution. We could really get away from the idea that teaching is "telling" and the pouring of information over pupils, and also from the idea that learning consists of memorizing. Only slowly do we move towards the idea of Carl Rogers in his 1970 book - Freedom to Learn, that the teacher is a facilitator of learning and that his job is one of developing in the pupil whatever potentialities the youngster has for discovery, investigation, experimentation, problem-solving, and creativeness. This has more application to the teaching of handicapped children than is commonly supposed.

This point of view of freeing rather than controlling is stressed in the 1970 Canadian publication, One Million Children, a report of the Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children. The Commission suggests that it is not so much what educational, medical and welfare personnel do to children or for children but rather what they do with them that counts in youngsters' development. This is true of school, hospital and service personnel.

During World War II I visited a treatment centre for emotionally disturbed soldiers and the psychiatrist in charge said, "The woman who scrubs the front steps is part of my treatment team". She was, for good or ill. So are the custodians in schools, and the maids, orderlies and clerks in treatment centres. The attitudes of such personnel affect the self-concepts and, therefore, the educational and personal growth of all types of exceptional children. All of you could give examples of teachers and other people who have contributed to your life by their interest in and belief in you. May I give a personal example. In 1959 I spent 5 weeks in hospital with a heart attack. The person in the hospital who, by far, contributed the most to my morale and recovery was a German orderly, not my nurses.

Practical Implications for Work with Exceptional Children

If it is true that the self-concept is of high importance both for a child's achievement in school and his relationships with others, what are the implications of this for those of us who work in the field of special education. In this group I would include both those who teach handicapped and gifted children and those who supervise teachers and administer programs. I include supervisors and administrators since special class teachers, remedial teachers, therapists and other types of specialized personnel also have self-concepts and how they come to feel about themselves affects how they relate to and work with their colleagues, and the exceptional child and his parents.

General Attitudes

1. While, in my experience, special class teachers and other specialized personnel who work with exceptional children are the most dedicated personnel I know of anywhere, nonetheless we need continually to make sure that our own attitudes to these youngsters are based on a belief that these children are worthy of respect and of having the same right as all children to develop to their highest potential. We may arrive at these attitudes in various ways either from a religious or a humanistic and democratic point of view.

The history of attitudes towards the handicapped has exhibited the stages, first of fear, then of tolerance, then of pity, and finally of acceptance and respect. This respect must be free from condescension and down-grading. No one - children, adults or older people wants others to condescend to him. To give a personal example, I now belong to the down-graded minority of older people and I continually run into people who immediately write me off just because I am old. If I have the opportunity I can sometimes, through conversation and personal contact, change that attitude and win acceptance. Unfortunately, handicapped youngsters are not always able to do that. In any case, handicapped individuals, if they are to have a healthy self-concept, must have acceptance and respect from their family and age-mates as well as from teachers, doctors, nurses and all who try to help them to grow and develop.

Liking and Respect Must be Genuine

2. In dealing with exceptional children we need to realize that, if we are to do our best for them, our interest in and liking for them must be real and not phony.

I spent over twenty years of my life in teacher-education. In working with student-teachers I used the cliche', "few people can resist being liked". In its negative form I used to say, "never allow yourself to dislike a pupil. You can't afford to do so for your own sake, the child's sake and the class' sake. A child is bound to respond to your negative reaction to him and is likely to become either a behavior or a learning problem. Then you pat yourself on the back, and say, 'Aha, I had a hunch that child was going to be a problem' when you created your own problem".

Carl Rogers in a 1969 book, Freedom to Learn, cites evidence from research in psychotherapy of the effects of the attitudes of therapists on their clients. The study indicated that the clients who showed the greatest therapeutic change perceived more of the qualities of genuineness and prizing in their therapists than did those who showed less change. Furthermore, this difference in perceived relationship was evident as early as the first interview.

As I have already indicated, genuine interest in and concern for pupils is vital for both handicapped and gifted children. Indeed, the latter may be considered a threat by their teachers and be snuffed down. The creativity of these youngsters may be resented and repressed.

Non-verbal Communication

3. I would like to stress the importance of our non-verbal communication to developing exceptional children. By non-verbal communication I mean such things as tone of voice and inflection in speaking, the emphasis placed on individual words in a sentence, facial expressions, gestures, posture and touch. Young children and handicapped children are likely to respond to these expressions of feeling rather than to words as such. They react to phoniness and insincerity as well as to genuine interest and affection. Watzlawick and his colleagues in their book, Pragmatics of Human Communication stress the fact that it is impossible for us not to communicate, and that we communicate whether we accept, reject or ignore another person. Behavior has no opposite: it is impossible not to behave. Indeed, in their psychotherapy, these writers seek to understand and treat human behavior problems in terms of the individual's interaction with his family and with others in his environment rather than in terms of his individual psychology or intrapsychic conflicts.

Rosenthal, in trying to account for the greater achievement of the group of pupils whose teachers expected good progress, says, "by what she said and when she said it, by her facial expressions, postures, and perhaps by touch, the teacher may have communicated to these children of the experimental groups that she expected improved intellectual performance. Such communications together with possible changes in teaching techniques may have helped the child to learn by changing his self-concept, his expectations of his own behavior, and his motivation as well as his cognitive style and skills". Certainly teachers and others who work with children have always used non-verbal communication to convey their message by such means as the smile, the frown, the shaking or nodding of the head, the pat on the back, the hand on the shoulder, the arm around the shoulder, or, with small children, the hug.

Danger Ahead! Labels

6. Turning to another point, I'd like to put up a sign for teachers and all other members of the helping professions as well as for parents and the public. The sign is "Danger Ahead! Labels". One of the greatest sources of damage to all types of handicapped children is that of the use of labels and stereotypes. When we say that a child is retarded, or brain-damaged or emotionally disturbed, or cerebral palsied, or has a vision or hearing loss or is delinquent, we place him in a type or category that is assumed to have certain definite characteristics. And yet within any of these groups there are very great individual differences. Take for example, any group of educable or trainable retarded children, whether chosen on a psychometric, educational or adaptive basis, and you will find that the children present a wide variation in every conceivable trait - physical, intellectual, emotional and social. Each child is unique in his own particular deficits, strengths and styles of learning. Incidentally, I'd like to stress the idea of differences of children in styles of learning. One of the great advances which we very greatly need to make is in our ability to identify the individual styles of learning in children.

In any case, labels and stereotypes are not diagnoses. In order to do our best for an exceptional child, what we need is not labels but an assessment of the youngster in terms of his specific management and treatment needs as far as these can be determined.

Barbara Furneaux of England in her 1969 book, The Special Child, emphasizes the danger of such labels as "autistic", brain-damaged" and "emotionally disturbed". She concludes, "It may well be the case that soon the whole method

of categorizing children for special education will be revised and be based not upon their disease or defect but upon their learning characteristics as well as on their immediate level of intellectual and emotional functioning."

It would appear that we need a vigorous campaign to put across the above point of view to teachers and other professionals as well as to parents and the general public. This tendency to think we can understand and control a situation if we can only name it is, as Rollo May points out in his recent best-seller, Love and Will, a very basic tendency in human beings. In primitive life, if the evil spirit could be identified, it could be cast out. In the age of witchcraft, if the witch who cast the spell or put the hex on the individual could be identified and burned, that would solve the sufferer's problem. Indeed, as Rollo May points out, the same tendency occurs in all of us. If we are ill and go to a doctor and he names the disorder, we feel relieved even if the diagnosis is that of a serious disease.

It is true that, as professionals, we do use categories or labels as general pegs on which to hang our thinking but we should continually remind ourselves of the danger to the child of our thinking of him in terms of a general category and should bring ourselves back to thinking in terms of his specific management and treatment needs.

Providing Success Experiences

5. Aside from our attitudes in influencing the self-image of the exceptional child, an important factor in improving a youngster's self-concept is that of providing him with success experiences. These may consist of achievement in a limitless number of physical, academic or vocational tasks or activities as well as in a great variety of interpersonal relationships. In any case, it is the responsibility of any school or learning centre to provide its pupils with experiences at which they can succeed after reasonable effort. Certainly, in the development of exceptional children nothing succeeds like success and this success must be provided for them.

One of the values of programmed learning and of operant conditioning lies in their providing success experiences which raise the child's self-concept through his direct and immediate success, and through the increased recognition and approval the youngster receives from his peers and others because of his successful achievement. Incidentally, those who use operant conditioning need to remind themselves that rewards or reinforcers consist not only of smarties, tokens or privileges but

also of praise and approval from significant people in the child's life - teachers, parents, child-care workers, therapists and other adults.

Working for Acceptance by Others

6. If those of us who are working with exceptional children really want to give these youngsters a chance to develop a wholesome self-concept, we will need to go beyond making sure of our own attitudes towards them. We must, in addition, work intelligently and persistently to win acceptance and respect for these handicapped youngsters from others.

If an exceptional child is being educated in a regular school, the attitudes of the principal and regular classroom teachers of the school are crucial in building or damaging the youngster's self-concept. So far as the exceptional child's normal peers are concerned, it has been my experience that this depends very largely on the attitudes, spoken and unspoken, of the principal and the regular teachers. The attitude of the child's peers is important whether the youngster is in a special class or not. Indeed, Kolstoe, in his 1970 book, Teaching Educable Mentally Retarded Children, points out that those who oppose special classes may forget that, where a retarded child remains in a regular class, he may be as effectively isolated by his normal peers as if he were not physically present.

There are many ways in which special class teachers can influence the attitudes of principals and their regular-class colleagues. The most important of these is the special class teacher's attitude towards her own work, not as something isolated from the general stream of education but rather as an integral part of the school's job in dealing with the strengths, deficits and learning styles of all the community's children, each one of whom is unique and special. Another method of improving the understanding of principals and teachers is to invite them into the classroom and, if possible, involve them in teaching the exceptional child. This plan could have two possible effects. One is the realization that exceptional children are first of all children, just as different from one another as are the pupils in any class, and second that the principles of teaching and learning are as basic for these youngsters as is the case with their more normal peers.

So far as improving the public's acceptance of and respect for all types of exceptional children is concerned, the work of the American and Canadian Associations for the Mentally Retarded has demonstrated that the public's attitudes can be changed by vigorous attempts to provide the public with information and with demonstrations of what can be done. It is for example, 46 years since I first

started to study retarded children and in that stretch of time there has been a phenomenal change of attitude on the part of the public so that in this city, all classes for the trainable retarded are administered as part of the public school system and are supported by provincial and local taxes. This tendency is widespread so that in some Canadian provinces all schools for the trainable retarded are a part of the regular public school system. In any case, we as professionals have to put forth every possible effort to interpret the needs of the exceptional child and to advocate his right to the fullest opportunity to develop his potentialities. Actually, special education is not special, it is merely one aspect of the community's responsibility for meeting the needs of all the community's children.

Partnership of Teachers with Parents

7. Another basic aspect of the human factor in effecting exceptional children's development is the establishment of an effective working partnership between the parents and teachers of these youngsters whether they are in a special class or special school or in a regular class. After all, education is all of one piece and every child has four sets of teachers: (1) Home teachers (parents); (2) Playmate teachers; (3) School teachers; and (4) Community teachers. The child's community teachers consist of all the mass media (T.V., radio, magazines, newspapers, movies and paperbacks), recreational and cultural as well as health and welfare agencies, and the standards and values held by the community with respect to such areas as education, law-abidingness, and sexual behavior. Certainly, at all levels of education, parents and teachers are inevitably partners. They may not like this but it is an unescapable fact of life nonetheless.

Although during my educational career, one of my major activities has been the promotion of parent-teacher cooperation I cannot, because of limitations of time, pursue this topic further now. May I refer you to a 1970 publication of the Council for Exceptional Children. It is the Parent-Teacher Partnership, by Ray H. Bersch. This writer urges teachers to adopt a bicurricular approach to their pupils' learning. By bicurricular approach Bersch means that child-rearing is the curriculum of the home while academic proficiency and vocational skills constitute the curriculum of the school. The same principles of learning apply to both. Learning is learning wherever it occurs. Both the home and the school are learning-laboratories even if methods used in the home are less formal and perhaps less well articulated than those of the school.

Barsch believes that the job of the teacher is not to assign specific homework to parents but rather to make them aware that the same principles of learning apply to the home as to the school. In the family, in the learning involved in the child's toiletting, eating, washing, dressing, sand play, block building, getting and putting away his toys and getting along with others, the youngster learns to refine his visual discrimination, to appreciate the differences between objects, and to treat other people fairly. The parents need to be aware that the development of the child's perceptual and motor abilities as well as his emotional attitudes is not limited to what happens in school but is an essential part of his home learning.

Barsch suggests to teachers ways in which the child-rearing practices in the home and the more formal aspects of instruction in the school can be co-ordinated to ensure the best development of the child. Further, he suggests the use of parent counsellors who will help the parents during the prenursery or preschool years of the child to provide adequate opportunities for the youngster's sensory, motor and language development.

May I conclude my remarks with a plea for more research in the factors which are involved in the human relationship aspect of the development of exceptional children. By that I mean the relationships which exist between these children and their teachers, parents, peers and the general public. Certainly for exceptional children's greatest possible development, research in the human factor must keep pace with research in the technological aspects of their learning and growth.

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PREVENTION FOR ALL CHILDREN OF SCHOOL FAILURE, EXCLUSION AND DISORIENTATION

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The suggested emphasis on the alleviation for all children of school failure, exclusion and disorientation was thoughtfully worded to call attention to the schools' responsibility in these matters in contrast to the students'. Too many school aged children (including exceptional children) are still failed, drop out, are pushed out, excluded or disorientated against. The problems are critical and solutions are urgently needed.

There are numerous indictments of schools for their failures. Statistics reveal that an average of one of four children who enter first grade drop out before completing the twelfth grade. In some schools as many as seventy percent drop out before graduation and it is not uncommon to find the children of inner city schools achieving three years below grade norms in basic skill subjects. In the recent 100th anniversary issue of the Saturday Review of Literature Education Supplement (September, 1970) there are numerous statements accusing the schools of drastic failure. A few quotations will amply illustrate.

> "The student rebellion . . . made clear that in large part the schools were failing the advantaged as well as the deprived." "... during the sixties the schools were challenged increasingly not only for their contemporary failures, nor even for the fact that they have always failed the poor and the disadvantaged, but because they were positively destructive influences for many of the children entrusted to their care."

On virtually each of the supplement's 30 pages can be found one or more statements which say in many ways what Peter Schrag succinctly said in

his pessimistically titled article, Out of the Impossible Dream, (p. 60)

"The school system has failed."

There is much persuasive evidence that schools too frequently have failed. It seems that we have no choice but to agree with this conclusion or to conclude that as a profession, educators have failed adequately to convince the critics that schools are successful. Where does special education stand? Whether it is true or not (as we seem to claim on every possible occasion) that we are "a part of and not apart from" majority education, we too stand accused (if not indicted and convicted) in one or the other of these two ways.

Some special educators would agree that education has failed and that special education too has failed, but that the solution for both lies in the application of "special education concepts" (e.g., individualizing instruction; homogeneous grouping; operationally defined behavioral objectives) generally to education for all children. Some would say that special education has failed, but that its solution lies in softening "hardened" categories in which may amount to an "enumerical movement" among discrete categories. A major focus of this "movement" for many would be a model based on learning characteristics rather than on medical, legal, administrative or other categorical models.

Some would say that special education has failed, and that the failure in large part is due to our inability or unwillingness to do well enough what we know how to do. Thus they would argue that education can be rescued from failure by the wider application of simple but powerful concepts from behavioral science such as operant conditioning, precision teaching, or other varieties of programmed instruction.

There are some who would say that special education has failed to the extent that it has thrived on the failures of majority education and

that such labeling is actually an index of failure because it is the result of sifting, sorting or otherwise contributing to the exclusion of children from majority education. And, though it has always been popular to say that we should "work ourselves out of a job" by enabling children to return to the "mainstream" of majority education, we have been singularly successful in returning substantial numbers of children to the majority programs. Some would say they have given up efforts to return children to majority education because the "mainstream is too polluted."

Still others would argue that special education has succeeded to the extent that it has been given the opportunities, financial resources, community understanding, qualified teachers, research findings, appropriate pupil-teacher ratios, necessary instructional materials, resource and diagnostic centers, transportation, structure of facilities. They seem to say that if special education could be accorded appropriate recognition and lot out of its proverbial "brass closets," off the auditorium stages, or out of the basements and backs of the buses, it could succeed and provide a model for majority education.

It would be difficult and perhaps futile to enumerate and delineate all the arguments that might be made on the issue of success or failure of special education. It may suffice to say that there are still too many school failures, exclusions, and discriminatory practices.

We do need truly to individualize instruction for all children and to value more the wide range of individual differences we find among children. Traditional categories and the underlying assumptions on which they are based have frequently been defeating to many of our purposes. We do need to be more adept at applying concepts from behavioral science. We must refuse to aid and abet failure, exclusion, and discrimination in majority education. We must discontinue failing, excluding and discriminating

against exceptional children to special education.

Peter Schrag says the impossible dream is ended. During the last part of that "dream"—in the 60's—more federal legislation, more money, and more effort was devoted to universal, quality education than was ever before dreamed possible. School failure exclusion and discrimination should have been, but were not, substantially decreased. What was lacking? Was the effort too little and too late? Or is it too early and too possible to conclude that the "dream" is impossible or ended?

I believe that among important ingredients that were lacking were, first, a genuine effort to bring our behavior and values as a society into harmony with our American creed and to secure a stable world peace. We seem to value our gross national product and protection of our markets more than we value the attainment of equal rights and equal responsibilities for all our citizens. While we are the most technologically advanced and affluent nation in the world, substantial numbers of our citizens still go to bed hungry and without adequate shelter or medical care. Our behavior is ill attuned to our democratic creed and heritage.

Secondly, there has been a failure on our part as educators to function effectively as a true profession. We have not had the courage adequately to up-grade our own professional standards, to demand the tools and facilities we require for efficient learning and instruction, nor to translate what we know and can determine by research into constructive practice.

This organization and all of us as responsible citizens must rise to the challenge of changing the gloomy outlook for large numbers of children. We cannot plead for integration of exceptional children, nor even work effectively for their non discriminatory inclusion in majority education.

while we as special educators remain uninvolved in critical social and political issues; if we continue segregated and aloof from majority education; and if we remain separated or estranged from our majority education colleagues. How many of us truly belong to and participate effectively in local, state or provincial, and national professional organizations? To what extent have we vigorously attempted to recruit into our professional membership our colleagues in majority education and allied professions?

Was the tremendous effort of the 60's too little and too late? I hope it is not too late and I believe it is too early and too presumptuous to conclude that the dream, impossible or not, is ended. We must try to achieve in the 70's what we dreamed of, but failed to achieve, in the 60's! What will your contribution be to eliminating for all children school failure, exclusion, and discrimination?

SYNERGY FOR WHAT?

M. Stephen Lilly
University of Oregon

Synergy. What a way to start a day, with a word as slippery and elusive as the times themselves. When the title for this session was first suggested, my response was "Fine, it's catchy and different, and allows me to say nearly anything I want to say." Upon closer consideration however, I found that the title made several demands upon the speakers involved. The first demand was for a dictionary, to assure myself that professionalism was still there and that synergy was there at all. Having found both alive and well in Webster's, the next task was to apply them both to what I really wanted to say to you this morning. In short, do I stretch the session title to fit the content of my paper, or the content to fit the session title? I found the bridge between the two to be much sturdier than I expected, and I trust that I have done little violence to either in preparing the remarks to follow.

I do not intend to pursue the professionalism part of the title, because I could do no better than the thousands who have gone before me, and we have more important matters to discuss. With regard to the "energy or synergy" issue, a few opening remarks are in order. In the first place, I am naturally skeptical of words borrowed from other areas of endeavor for use in the field of education, except when they seem to describe adequately an existing or at least a potential state of being in the field. In this sense, synergy fits rather well. Webster defines synergism as "the simultaneous action of separate agencies which, together, have greater total effect than the sum of their individual effects." Synergy is a "combined or cooperative action or force." Thus, synergy for our purposes defines a method of attacking a task or a problem. It does not define the problem. That is left for the persons whose job it still be to solve it.

The remainder of this talk will focus on definition of a set of problems within the field of special education, and consideration of synergistic approaches to solutions for those problems. It is my contention that special education as a system has failed in its quest to provide effective and benign educational alternatives for children who have experienced difficulty in school. A recent article in the September issue of Exceptional Children outlined in some detail my views on prevalent practices and policies in the field of special education, and these will not be reviewed here in full. The basic message of the article is that we must change both how we think of children presently labeled as exceptional and how we behave with regard to them. And we must change now. A new definition of exceptionality was offered which changed the emphasis from exceptional children to exceptional situations in the school, which were defined as follows:

> An exceptional school situation is one in which interaction between a student and his teacher has been limited to such an extent that outside intervention is deemed necessary by the teacher to cope with the problem.

Most importantly, it was stated that if changes are to take place in the structure of special education services, the time to act is now. Continued

use of a categorical funding base which is acknowledged to be inadequate by a growing number of professionals in the field can only lead to accountability problems in the all-too-near future. Change is inevitable, and change now is preferable.

Rather than spend our time this morning criticizing what is, let us instead examine some of the characteristics of what should be. There are many possible alternatives to the present special education model, and my purpose is not to choose one and push it this morning. Rather, I wish to point out several characteristics which must be present in the new system if we are to successfully overcome the shortcomings of our present practices.

The first necessary requirement of the new system is that it must place the responsibility for rectification of difficult classroom situations squarely on the shoulders of the regular class teacher. Special education can no longer be a permanent source of complete educational services for children. We must become a support service for the regular classroom teacher, dealing with specific problem situations at given points in time, rather than serving as a repository for children from whom a teacher feels she needs relief.

A second requirement of the new special education system is that it must be a "zero-reject" system. By this I mean that once a child is admitted into a regular class program within a school, it must be impossible to administratively separate him from that program for any reason. Once a child is in a regular class, permanent removal must be an administrative impossibility. This provision is necessary because if we allow ourselves the possibility of failure, and provide for a special class program even on a very small scale, this is planting the same seeds which were planted fifty years ago and we can expect the number of children thus served to grow, until we are again faced with the problem we are attempting to solve now. In short, we need a "zero-reject" system to protect ourselves from our tendency to label children and to prevent us from seeking easy solutions to complex problems.

A third characteristic of the system is that it must include provisions for both specifying and correcting the problem situation. In educationalese, it must provide for both diagnosis and remediation (of the problem, not the child). This implies that special educators, who have been treatment-oriented, must join hands with those persons who have traditionally been oriented toward diagnosis, principally the school psychologist, if this program is to work. A new approach to diagnosis is needed, along with a new approach to treatment, if we are to assist children and teachers in functioning adequately in the regular classroom.

What we have said thus far is that in order to place our own house in order, we must provide brooms for some of our neighbors as well. We are speaking of solving a problem of education, not of special education, and we must be willing to lose some of our hard earned identity as special educators to do it. We are speaking of a system in which special educators, school psychologists, and classroom teachers work as a team to solve problems rather than serving as relay stations along a one way track. And returning

to the theme of the session, this is what synergy is all about, the combination of a number of systems to produce what a single system alone cannot. Synergy means pulling together, rather than handing off, and pull together we must.

In closing, I wish to allude briefly to the combination of professionalism and synergy implied in the title of the session, and to apply it to a problem of great concern to me. In the September article, I noted with great concern that the most influential bodies in the field of special education, namely the Council for Exceptional Children and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, seem to be moving in the direction of strengthening and prolonging the traditional special education categories, rather than admitting their inadequacies and building alternatives. This is seen in the concerted effort to pass the Children with Learning Disabilities Act of 1969, which established learning disabilities as a hard and fast special education category. My concern is that these agencies are not acting on the concerns of special educators in the field, and this should not be possible if education is a profession.

One of the characteristics of a profession, according to Myron Lieberman, is a "comprehensive self-governing organization of practitioners." A profession does not admit of hierarchies such as exist in the field of education, and if I am concerned about CEC and BEH, I am even more concerned with the inaction of those of us who are practitioners, at whatever level, on a day-to-day basis. If we are professionals, we cannot wait for our large national and international organizations to solve the problems of the field. Rather than wait for them, we must lead them. This is the aspect of professionalism which frightens administrators and school board members, but it is the aspect upon which we should capitalize in bringing about changes in education of children in difficulty.

In short, if we are professionals, we cannot escape the fact that the greatest responsibility for change rests on our shoulders. As individual teachers, our responsibility is to the people we face daily, whether they be children or young adults in teacher training. As professionals seeking adequate educational treatment of children, however, our responsibilities range far beyond the classroom walls. At this point, I am issuing a call to action, a plea for each of us to face our larger responsibility. Change will come when we insist on it, insist with such tenacity that our voices can no longer be ignored. For the combined effect of professionalism and synergy can be summarized in a phrase of the day, a phrase we should welcome rather than fear. All power to the people.

PROBLEMS AND POLICIES: THE CHALLENGE OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Maynard C. Reynolds
University of Minnesota

The Policies Commission of CEC has been engaged for the last several years in discussions and in the drafting of statements dealing with major concerns of our field. It is quite evident that the course we have been on in special education is not all cleared for simple extrapolations. Change and challenge are in the air.

During the past year the Policies Commission conducted hearings at special meetings in San Francisco, Detroit and Washington. The "input" sessions at the Chicago convention last Spring also provided input. Let me list for you, just by mentioning topics, some of the items which have come up. Then I shall present to you a more detailed statement on several topics.

These are some of the concerns which CEC members are expressing:

- Excesses and Exclusions. Somehow the right of every child to suitable education - with no excesses or exclusions - needs to be established.

- CEC Activism. Should CEC use more aggressive methods of advocating needed programs for children? How can CEC take action to assure that schools assume their full responsibilities to children?

- Racism. Are racial values in our society extending into Special Education? How can Special Education move so as to help assure every child equality of educational opportunity?

- Accountability. Perhaps the educational "failures" of children should be attributed to teachers and schools - as moral as well as professional failures on their part.

- Open Administrative Arrangements. Somehow the image of special education as "special class" must be undone. Specialized programs can be created by many administrative arrangements.

- Earlier Intervention. Special education needs to emphasize earlier intervention so that more children may learn effectively in the first instance and avoid failure experience and special remedial programs.

- The Rights of Parents. What should parents' role be in school planning, child placement, goal-setting? Decentralization?

- Private Schools. Does the obligation to provide education to meet exceptional needs reside strictly within public schools? What about the tendency to channel substantial public money into private schools?

- Grading and Evaluation. How can evaluations of individuals be conducted without threat and failure?

- Teacher Rights. Should teachers have a right to exclude pupils from their classes?

- Earmarking. What extent should special education encourage further extensions of a specialized bureaucracy with "earmarked" funds to support programs for the handicapped?

But above all of these specific points, important as they are, there are fundamental questions being raised about the very definition of our field. In this more embracing context, I would like to discuss with you in some detail four major topics:

1) Categorization of children

2) Classification for educational purposes

3) Defining our field in terms of competency domains or institutional systems

4) The ways we allocate children to special programs

Each of these is a topic dealt with in draft statements of the policies commission, but what follows here is a personal statement.

Categories of Children:

In all of society there is rising revulsion against simplistic categorizations of human beings. The field of special education has been especially vulnerable to this trend because in defining itself it has tended to not only list various "categories" of exceptional children but to use negatively loaded terminology as well. For example, the list usually includes the mentally retarded, visually handicapped, hearing impaired, emotionally disturbed, and socially maladjusted. Legislation, teacher education, parent groups and school programs tend to use the categorical language.

Several problems may be created by such categorizing of people and of programs. First, there is a tendency to stereotype or to ascribe characteristics of the group to individuals. This is crude at best, frequently in error, and prejudicial to the interests of individuals. Second, there may be a tendency for the category labels to become stigmatic and to be attached indelibly to individuals; sometimes the child's label becomes an excuse for poor programs. Third, people who work with exceptional children may associate the categories with negative expectations which are then carried into their relationships with children and into curriculum planning. A degree of diagnogenic or prophecy-fulfilling inadequacy in the child's development may result. Fourth, an assumption is made frequently about an easy isomorphism between the categorical classification and educational classification. For example, it may be assumed that all partially sighted children should read expanded print - which is just not so; or that because a child is "mentally retarded" he should get the "primary life needs" curriculum - again, not necessarily so.

Researchers who study groups of handicapped children and contrast them with groups of so-called normals often add to the problem. On the basis of such studies, the mentally retarded, for example, have been described as cognitively rigid, unable to think abstractly, as showing stimulus trace or cortical ablation aberrations, as exhibiting dissociation of verbal and motor systems - and in many other ways. One could easily come to the absurd conclusion that somehow there is a sharp discontinuity in mental ability such that people who have IQs of 75 have entirely different characteristics than those with IQs of 75. Problems of these kinds abound in other areas of special education as well.

It is greatly unfortunate that anyone should ever think of children and plan for them mainly in terms of "categories" and, undoubtedly, there has been some exaggeration of the extent to which such practices have existed. The itinerant psychometrist, WISC kit at hand, pronouncing mental retardation after 50-minute tests and recommending special placements for children in schools he does not know, represents a grotesque over-simplification of professional service, which hopefully almost everyone understands. Whenever categorical language has been used it should

have been understood as but "shorthand" for complex sets of variables.

A different perspective – under the rubric of variables rather than categories – emphasizes continuous differences among children on certain dimensions which we then try to quantify in some way. It is not necessary to begin with categories; nevertheless, each of the previously mentioned categorical terms can be thought of as representing complex sets of variables. For example, "mental retardation" is a general term referring to a wide range of kinds and degrees of attenuation in cognitive development. Approaching our topic this way, we believe much as the weatherman deals with temperature, barometric pressure, *wind velocity and cloud cover* – all of which are variable rather than static and which combine in some unique form for any moment and place. One starts with variables to understand unique individuals. Most of the variables which we find interesting in studying exceptional children are of interest also with reference to other children, which is to say that the distributions are continuous, and extend over both exceptional and normal children. This continuity suggests that even if we attend to only a single variable so-called exceptional children are children "only a little more or" in some one or several aspects, and *do* not special "types".

It will behoove us considering their educational relevance to distinguish between two general classes of variables – source or surfacing variables and decision variables. Most of the traditional variables dealt with in Special Education – such as those relating to mental retardation, vision, hearing, emotional disturbance – are those I call source variables. They are the sources or indicators of educational problems. They may serve to alert us to problems or potential problems, but they are not decision variables. That is, they do not yield an analysis point to appropriate educational procedures. Consider, for example, the child who appears in school regularly with many bruises. It is clear that something *should* be done; a problem has been surfaced. But it is not clear whether the child is being abused by a parent, learning to skate or mutilating himself. The variables on which plans are made are of a different order than mere surfacing or source variables.

To give another example, very low visual acuity is surely a problem and can be viewed as quite a reliable source or indicator of special education problems. But poor sight itself is not a very good indicator of what educational procedures should be used. The relevant variables in deciding upon educational procedures might include tactual discrimination abilities at finger tips, intelligence, age, motivation, parental desires, resources of local schools on availability of low vision aids. Similarly, being mentally retarded may be a problem, but judging whether a child is likely to profit from a specialized school program may depend more upon the socio-psychological climate of his home than upon the immediate level of his cognitive functioning.

So far, I have wanted to point out some problems of categorizing people and to point out the *possibility* of approaching problems through variables. A main theme of this essay has been anticipated by distinguishing between source variables and decision variables – meaning by the latter term, those variables which help us make educational decisions.

Classification for Educational Purposes

In the preceding discussions it is assumed that schools should support alternative procedures and curriculums in order to accommodate all children. In this connection it is necessary, of course, to make classifications of children; or, in other words, to allocate children among programs. To develop this point of view it may be well to spell out the purposes of educational classification.

But first, it may be useful to consider the purposes of classification in settings other than the school, which sometimes gets in the way. Zubin[1] cites three purposes for diagnosis and classification of what he terms behavior disorders. These are: 1) to search for etiology; 2) to make a prognosis; 3) to select a therapy. Physicians and clinical psychologists tend to be oriented to these three purposes. In anticipation of the discussion of them which follows it may be said immediately that none of these purposes is the chief concern of the special educator, yet our information systems tend to become distracted to them.

It is perhaps relatively clear that classification merely according to Zubin's first purpose, etiology, is not a very useful approach in education. The cause of poor sight gives little help in deciding how one should teach a child. Similarly, it may matter not at all in educational planning whether the attentional problems of a child stem from brain injury or other causes. Etiological variables may be useful in education but that must be judged in the context of the educational decisions to be made and not directly in the framework of etiology.

Similarly, prognosis has limited usefulness as an educational approach. Educators are employed to influence children's learning and not simply to predict it. One of the great errors in education is that general or broad-band variables, such as IQ test results, which predict academic achievement moderately well in almost all situations, are over-used in decision making. Precisely because general intelligence test results predict learning and performance in many situations, they are virtually useless in choosing among situations. Educational decisions require attention to variables which produce interaction effects with educational treatment; that is, to variables which help us to make a difference rather than to make a prediction. This is far beyond the usual form of psychological reports often written in simple terms of "capacity", "expectation", or "underachievement".

Zubin's third purpose - the selection of treatment - cannot be dismissed lightly in the present context, for it is an important purpose of educational classification to select treatment. However, it is useful to distinguish between two general classes of treatments. The first is oriented to negative criteria in which case we use terms like prevention, cure or amelioration; and the second is to positive criteria for which we use terms like development, competency or achievement. In the second case, the concept of prevention is not meaningful in any full sense. On the other hand, Zubin tells of whole categories of medical treatments which were eliminated when antibiotics came on the scene.

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[1] Zubin, Joseph. Classification of behavior disorders. In Annual Review of Psychology. (Farnsworth, P. R. et al, Editors). Palo Alto: Annual Reviews; Pub. 1967

Educational treatments are always positive - concerned with teaching and learning, not with recovery from defects or simple prevention of problems. The educator "prevents" reading failure not by building anti-bodies, but by teaching reading or its prerequisites with greater resourcefulness and better effect among more children. To engage the teacher, or to be educationally relevant, one has to deal with development and with teaching; the criterion is positive and the concept of prevention is superfluous. To use Bruner's term, education is a growth science. To the extent that mental health and other fields succeed in specifying positive health-giving, life-fulfilling goals and orient themselves to pursuing such goals, to that extent there is but little disparity between their concepts and those of education. One might also predict that the extent to which fields such as mental health do become oriented to positive criteria, but they will find it increasingly useful to join forces with the school.

The view proposed here is that special educators should stop talking about dysfunctions, deficits, impairments and disabilities as if these were the starting points in education and as if recovery or remediation of them were the goal. Similarly, we should rid ourselves of tendencies to talk about "prevention" activities in education. Obviously, one prevents problems or creates a kind of invulnerability to insult whenever competencies are engendered, but let us keep it clear that competencies are the goal.

Thus it can be said that Zubin's third purpose of classification is not suitable to education to the extent that in concept of treatment it is oriented to more prevention or cure. Education in free society is predicated upon a commitment to enhance the development of all children in definitely positive ways. Special education is concerned that absolutely no child is omitted from that commitment and attempts to help differentiate school offerings sufficiently so that all children receive the help they need.

The purpose of educational classification of children which is proposed is to make allocations of the children among the various instructional systems. For example, there are many different systems by which children may be taught to read; the problem of classification is to allocate each child to the system most likely to serve him effectively. Within this framework, one does not speak of children as "learning disabled" or as "remedial cases" just because they require atypical methods of instruction. Furthermore, introducing greater variety in reading programs is not for the purpose of "preventing" reading problems; it is for the purpose of teaching reading more effectively to more children. To put this viewpoint more technically, educational classification depends upon studies of children using variables that produce interaction effects with instructional systems.

Educational Systems or Competency Domains

The meaning of the term INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS requires explication in this context. The term is used to refer to integrated sets of procedures and materials which may be used to achieve certain major learning goals with children; systems are themselves complex and require definitely systematic application by well-oriented teachers. As already indicated, examples are provided by the several systems which can be used to teach reading. There are methods which are highly oral-phonetic and others which are completely non-oral; there are methods which use modified orthography in introductory teaching and those which do not; there are methods which assume linguistic sophistication and those which do not. There are methods which assume normal vision and ordinary libraries and there are methods which depend upon tactile discrimination and special braille libraries. Presumably the schools of a community

should offer all "systems" which might be needed by any pupil.

The concept of instructional systems is widely open and not only to the many procedures not used in the schools but also to developments of the future. The field of special education is defined in terms of its responsibility to help develop and install highly differentiated school programs - many instructional systems - and to see that the related plans and decisions about children are made effectively. The particular systems for which special education carries primary responsibility include many in the category of language learning, cognitive development, psychomotor training, socialization and affective learning. Systems of language and speech instruction which do not assume hearing or normal auditory feed-back are quite specialized. Similarly, methods of teaching for mobility and orientation without sight require specialized efforts. Application of behavior management procedures to produce basic responding, attending and exploring behavior requires specialized efforts. The offering of especially intensive preschool language instruction to children who have unusual cultural backgrounds presents its special aspects. Similarly, the management of environments oriented to "primary life needs" needs specialized attention. One can view the "crisis teacher" model as a special system for interventions in school operations to assist both pupils and teachers at times of emotional crises. College departments of special education must define the particular competency domains & methods to emphasize in order to help build highly differentiated school programs of these kinds.

It should be noted that the concept of instructional systems outlined above does not use "child category" language. Rather, the emphasis is upon specifying competency domains and specific instructional goals. Hopefully, allocation of children to specialized instructional systems is to be approached openly - the decisions always resting upon what is judged to be the best of the available alternatives for each child. One does not start nor end with simple categories of children. Similarly, it is proposed that specialized teacher preparation would carry labels reflecting the special competency domains rather than categories of children.

Allocation to Systems

A key consideration in relation to the concept of Special Education as the aggregate of highly special instructional systems is the problem of allocating specific children among the "systems". The problem of allocation can be thought of as a special case of classification which Cronbach and Gleser call a "placement" decision. In essence, the placement decision involves maximizing the pay-off for individuals within an institution in which several alternative treatments are available. (Assuming that all individuals are to be retained with the system; that is, assuming that no selection-rejection decision is made.) The traditional prediction model of the school is not useful in making the placement or allocation decision and neither is simple categorization by handicaps; rather, we must learn to interpret variables which produce interaction effects with instructional systems. These I have called "decision" variables. In other words, children should be placed in "special" programs on the basis of demonstrated aptitude-treatment interactions.

The logic of the approach is quite different from procedures now commonly used which tend to depend upon certain broad-based variables such as IQ or "decibel loss in the speech range" to make placement decisions. To put this another way, variables which produce similar sizes of regression lines for all approaches do not help choose between approaches. When we have learned to specify the variables that should be used in allocating children to "special" programs we will, of course, have something quite unlike present simple systems of categories of exceptional children.

There is a great need for research which shows how aptitudes and instructional systems can be joined optimally in educating exceptional children. School psychologists, teachers, social workers, counselors, and administrators who make the decisions about children, the "organizers" of school programs, need to be updated in their work. A major problem in the field is to provide appropriate training for these decision makers.

Summary and Implications

In summary, this view suggests, first, that we try to be more explicit about what special education is. The concept of specialized instructional systems is proposed which has major implications for the ways we form both teacher preparation programs and school programs. Secondly, this view suggests that we need to study children in terms of variables which aid in making allocation or placement decisions within a highly differentiated school system. The identification of such variables requires demonstrating aptitude-treatment interactions. This concept of special education radically reverses present views of categories of children and special placements by categories on more confusing variables. It has been proposed that main attention go to variables which produce interaction effects with alternative treatment systems rather than to simple description of handicaps. This is clearly a claim for a detailed educational definition of our problems and procedures. Some practical implications are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Special educators should define their field mainly in terms of specialized instructional systems in the schools and themselves as advocates for the children who are not well-served in the schools except by special arrangements. By "systems" I do not refer to administrative arrangements, but to specialized curriculums and methods which may be required by some students. These programs may need special labels - such as the lipreading program, the braille teaching laboratory, the "crisis teacher" or the "engineered classroom". What we then must do is to see that children needing these special "systems" do, indeed, get them. Children will not need to carry labels and certainly need not be considered defective, impaired, or disabled simply because the educational procedures needed are unusual.

In administratively organizing school programs, we should absolutely maximize the responsibilities of regular classroom personnel by using terms of teachers and specialists, upgrading regular teacher training, using "resource rooms", etc., rather than to use segregation systems for pupils. However, even with extraordinary efforts, some specialized facilities will nevertheless continue to be needed for the foreseeable future - and it is a disservice to children and families to argue for precipitous phase-downs on all special schools and classes. The pivotal concern should be the improvement of regular classes and not the abrupt demise of any administrative arrangement.

Training programmes for teachers and other special education personnel should be made specific to instructional systems, rather than to categories of children. In other words, we should train teachers of braille or of the Orton-Gillingham system - rather than teachers of the "blind" or "learning disabled". Training programmes for decision-makers, such as school psychologists, should be radically revised to provide explicit orientation to educational systems.

State and local regulations and procedures for special education should be centered on special programs and the people who conduct them - rather than on categories of children. School systems should be given special financial aids for opening up several alternative systems for teaching reading, for example, rather than for identifying "learning disabled" children. Leadership personnel in special education should centre their efforts on improvement of programs, rather than on regulating boundaries of the categories of children.

Special education should shift major attention to ways of inserting itself back into mainstream educational structures. The legislation, the "earmarks" and the special bureaucracies produced over the past decade have made their point in strong fashion. But, in the process, we have failed to win leadership and concern of the most progressive general leaders in education. Somehow, while continuing to advocate strongly the case of all children who might be rejected from opportunities in the schools and holding on to present bureaucratic powers we should seek also the strengths of an integrated place in schools at every level.

It is a distraction, I believe, from the main issues to argue about who is to be "blamed" for the difficult educational problems of some children. It is not more sensible to argue the extreme case of "teacher accountability" than the case that a child with problems is defective or inferior. It is analogous to the fruitless nature vs. nurture debates. Neither does it say anything to say simply that both child and teachers, or school systems, are involved. What we must do is to understand problems and deal with them in terms of specific interactions of child, teacher and task. Discussions which fall short of that level are mere rhetoric or emotion. The view proposed here involves focus on specific interactions and not on child or system failures.

Hopefully, the points of view espoused here, if implemented, could serve to take us in the direction of individualized early placement for pupils so that they need not experience long periods of failure before specialized resources are provided. In this way perhaps we can learn, gradually, ways for removing the degrading terminology now applied to children simply because their education is proceeding badly. They will have been placed in special programs not because they have failed nor because they are impaired, but simply because that is the most promising educational situation for them.

The legislative structure which categorizes special education is drawn in language which stresses categories and more surface variables. Perhaps that is inevitable and eventually not unique. In health, for example, much legislation is drawn in general terms such as "heart", "stroke", "mental health" or "cancer"; but program development does not proceed in such simple categories. Similarly, in special education we may be able to live with social action groups and legislation organized according to simple categorical language - but we should not let programs and children get confined by such language. The late Ray Graham used to advise special educators to drive ahead in program development and to

let legislative changes come when necessary to validate new approaches. There is great need now for action in special education which streamline legislation and concepts of the past to new meanings and more flexible programs.

The Social Revolution and Special Education

Ronald E. Jones
The Board of Education, City of Toronto

A little over a year ago at one of our eastern Canadian universities a group of protesting students invaded the administrative offices of the university and took possession. When the furor subsided, 2 million dollars worth of damage had been done. During the last school year in Toronto a group of parents of children in Opportunity Classes combined together to present a brief to the school board and appear as a delegation before the members of the board. They denounced the special education program, claiming that their children were socially stigmatized, discriminated against, and were not learning anything. Within the past month, also in Toronto, representatives of the Teacher's Federation have met with the senior officials and asked that they be permitted to take part in discussions having to do with promotion policies, evaluation procedures, sabbatical leave regulations, and even such matters as the selection of their own principals. And the entire Canadian nation has been shocked in the last few days by the FLQ kidnapping of two important persons and murder of one of them.

What is the connection between these seemingly unrelated incidents? How are they affecting school programs in the 1970's? What is their impact on special education?

These are the kinds of things that I shall try to deal with in my talk to you this evening.

A recent book published by the Delacourte Press of New York has the title, Teaching As A Subversive Activity. It was not written by a politician or an admiral or management consultant but by Neil Postman of New York University and Charles Winegartner of Queen's College, both ex-classroom teachers. Having chosen this rather startling title for their book, they proceed in the introduction to point out what certain well-known and scholarly Canadians and Americans are saying about the institution of education today. Marshall McLuhan says it's irrelevant. Robert Weiner says it shields children from reality. John Gardner says it does not develop intelligence. John Holt says it's based on fear. Carl Rogers says it avoids the promotion of significant learnings. Paul Goodman says it induces alienation and Edgar Freidenburg says it punishes creativity and independence. What a list of condemnations!

If things are only half this bad, education is in a real mess in our two countries today. My own view is that history will undoubtedly record that for the last century and more, education was suited to the times and served our nations well. At the same time, this is undoubtedly cause for concern. What has brought about this marked reversal of affairs?

The question can only be answered in the context of social revolution. It's very difficult to realise, even though we mouth the words often, that we are indeed living in a time of great historical significance. There is no doubt it's an age of social revolution greater than the renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries or even that of the industrial revolution. It's impossible to comprehend what's going on in the field of education today and it's impossible to decide what direction we must take, unless we think of this revolutionary concept. We are not living in one of the quiescent lulls of history but in a time of great change and revolution. It's interesting to speculate as to how posterity will look upon our age. Will it be known as the atomic age, the space age or the age of automation? Dare we think that in the future historians will look back and say that it was the beginning of the age of education? We will have to change things a lot faster than we have been changing if this is to be the case.

The hopeful thing is that many of us have changed and are changing, changing in our outlook, philosophies and practices. Are you a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist or a moderate progressive? Consider the following five questions: (1) Have you changed in your theatre-going activities in the last decade? During this past summer did you attend festivals like a Shakespearian festival or did you attend performances like the musical, Hair, or movies like I Am Curious (Yellow)? Even a decade ago performances like the last ones I have mentioned would not have been acceptable to most of our profession. (2) Have you kept pace musically? When you hum a tune in an idle moment would it be a phrase from the Jupiter Symphony or from The Age of Aquarius? Most of my friends and colleagues hum tunes like the latter one even though they don't know the words, which is perhaps a good thing. "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason. How infinite in faculties. In form and moving. How express and admirable. How like an angel." (3) Have you keep up with the changes in moral standards particularly in regard to sex? No matter how conservative or traditional you think your attitudes in this regard might be, let me ask you what your attitude is, for instance, to legal abortion and to whether or not we should teach unmarried mothers in our schools. Most members of our profession have modified their attitudes almost completely in regard to such matters in the last decade. How do you stand in regard to dress and deportment of students in school, particularly with reference to such things as long hair and beards, miniskirts for girls, slacks and pant suits? There was no question a few years ago that these things were an important element in school standards and school progress. Has the school that you know best changed in this regard in the last few years? (5) Where do you stand in regard to social action? Are you opposed to student protest? How do you feel about teacher strikes? Whatever your own thoughts and feelings about these things may be, you'll have to admit that a very large section of our profession has changed its attitude and deportment in these regards in the past decade or two. There is no doubt about it, the whole of society is in a ferment and these are only a few of the symptoms.

The social revolution of our times: we can't escape it, we are in it, we are a part of it, and the significant thing for us as we meet here in this CEC Northwest Regional Conference is that it is with this background and in this context that

all of our discussions must take place. Some wag has said that as Adam and Eve walked out of the Garden of Eden, Adam turned to his mate and said, "Well, dear, don't worry; you'll understand what's happening to us best if you realize that we are in an age of transition." An example of this happened at the recent annual meeting of the Toronto Social Planning Council. The Social Planning Council is a central co-ordinating group for all or nearly all of the social agencies in town. For years it has been managed by a board of directors of what might be called the establishment group in our town. This year for the first time an activist group invaded the annual meeting and prevented the election or the re-election of the board of directors until procedures were adopted that permitted representatives of the clientele of the agencies to be on the board. They were able to do this by, in the preceding months, getting membership for a number of their groups for the nominal membership fee of $2.00, packing the annual meeting and pretty well controlled it. The result is that now our Social Planning Council has a representative group of activists on its board, and we are interestingly awaiting developments and results in the coming year. Another small bit of evidence is that the Toronto City Council, the governing municipal body in Toronto, has a radical young alderman who dresses and acts like a hippie. He is an elected representative from a downtown ward, a lawyer by profession, and his avowed aim is to have the people's wishes paramount. He opposes the building and erection of the Spadina Expressway, a proposed new elevated traffic expressway that will bisect our town down the middle from north to south with much consequent effect on residential areas and on the traffic in the downtown part of the city. He also opposes the proposed building of an offshore airport because of its effect on nearby residential areas, and most of all, opposes the destruction of slum houses and their replacement by so-called redevelopment projects. He points to the fact that much of our redevelopment in the downtown core of Toronto has had an adverse effect on family living and community spirit, and that in no way, shape or form have the wishes of the inhabitants of these slum areas been considered in the redevelopment plans that we have had for the past twenty or twenty-five years.

Another aspect of the social revolution is the gradual disappearance of the work ethic. Do you remember the hymn, "Work for the night is coming"? It typifies the moral code of my generation, that is, that work is something ennobling, almost sacred, and something to be instilled into all the young. But in spite of this Calvinistic code that most of us were brought up with, we have gradually developed shorter and shorter work hours, longer holidays and more and more labour saving devices. The work ethic is disappearing, and if what we have been hearing about computers and cybernetics is true, this trend is going to accelerate greatly in the next decade or two. Have you heard of the labour union that is now on strike for a 28-hour work week? In contrast, most teachers of my age group are noted work addicts and the question arises, if that golden age of leisure ever gets here, what will we do with all the spare time? The second question of course is, what are the implications of this trend for school practice? I shall return to these questions in a few moments.

Another major aspect of the social revolution that affects us in the schools is the threat to individual freedom in society today. It is this factor that is at the root of most protest movements, and if one discounts the extreme radical fringe bent on violence, it's the most profound motivating factor in social unrest.

When speakers and authors deal with this sort of thing they commonly refer to automation, industrial technology, increased speed in nature of communications, the population explosion, increased organization of our society, the development of giant organizations and centralized controls, and the advance of science as opposed to the retreat of folklore, ancient faiths, and beliefs in customs. There is no doubt that all these influences and others tend to make us fit the pattern of the mass man and to minimize the differences that make us individuals. You remember how W.H. White in his book, The Organization Man, decried the trend to submerge the individual. In order to obtain security and a higher standard of living, White said that we have yielded to the big organization; we believe in togetherness, and we subordinate ourselves to the group. White further claimed that schools have contributed to this drift to conformity. He pointed out that standardized testing procedures, our efforts to make deviates adjust to some sort of mythical mean, and our reliance on group processes are some of the indications of schools following the trend. One is reminded of the scary writings of Orwell and Huxley, the completely centralized control of society, the development of the scientific caste or class system, the abolishment of the free will of the individual. I can remember having similar feelings when I read Hershey's "The Child Buyer".

The school, of course, has been traditionally conservative. Social change is always slower than industrial and technological change and perhaps the element in our society which has been the slowest to change over the years is education. Now we are in a new era. Now it's industry and business, with its massed produced stereotyped products that are making identical consumers of us all. Now it's the mass media which are producing common tastes across the nation and ironing out individual differences. Suddenly, from being the main agency for preserving the tradition of the past and maintaining uniformity, the school has changed to perhaps the only agency for fostering divergencies and differences. We may very well be the last bastion of individuality. Our job is probably to defeat the onset of Huxley's Brave New World. It is for this reason that the old timers amongst us who were brought up on rote learning and drill and memorization now must yield to the influence of those who have been stressing creativity, originality, critical thinking, the development of independence and the fostering of individual differences.

The chief aspect of the social revolution as it affects schools, of course, is the great drive for social justice--the selection of the term "Just Society" by the winning political party in our last Federal election was no accident. It was chosen because it coincided with the mood of the times. The great social and cultural movement that began in the early Christian era and before and came to us through Magna Carta and the social reform and trade union movements in Great Britain, through the writing of Marx and Engels and in another form through Ghandi and Martin Luther King--this movement has culminated in our times.

It hit the United States before it hit us insofar as schools are concerned. It got into high gear there about a decade ago when Mrs. Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus in Birmingham, Alabama. It started then, in the U.S.A., as a protest by black people about black people's problems and one of the chief reasons for them was schools and integration. It's now spread to a revolution by white people about white people's problems--female people about female people's problems--and really all people about all people's problems.

In our country, an understanding of this social revolution helps explain the Separatist Problem in Quebec, the rising demands of Indians and Eskimos and such matters as the Social Planning Council and neighbourhood protest groups mentioned earlier. It also explains student unrest, community demands for school use and refusals on the part of parents and pupils alike to accept the restrictive patterns of the past.

What are the implications for schools? Schools are going to be vastly different. The wilder prophets like McLuhan and Goodman say our type of school is dead. Even Harold Mitzel writing in the Kappan last April says "The last 3 decades of the 20th century will witness a drastic change in the business of providing instruction in the schools. Change by the year 2000 will be so thoroughgoing as to be termed a revolution."

Now that's really the bulk of my message this evening. We're in the beginning stages of a social revolution and part of it will be a revolution in instruction. Before concluding, I'll touch briefly on 3 aspects of school practice that, in my view, will be chiefly affected and then make some reference to the effects on Special Education. These are:

(a) Interpersonal relationships,

(b) Community involvement,

(c) Instruction.

The changing relationship between person to person regardless of race, colour, creed, sex, social class, etc., is the outstanding characteristic of the social revolution. In schools it means a complete end, in the next 3 decades of authoritarianism. The teacher or principal will have little or no status or authority by virtue of his position or title.

This does not mean no status at all. However, his respect and dignity and status will derive from his superior scholarship, his ability in understanding and assisting others in a sort of guidance or counselling relationship and his overall character or virtue as a human individual.

Relationships amongst school staffs will be greatly modified, too, and the hierarchical structure of departmental heads, Vice-Principals and Principal will

break down to be replaced by staff teams, committees and a re-alignment of duties and responsibilities.

Perhaps you have observed that the Toronto Board of Education has directed me to report on how our high school staff might be involved in the selection of their principals. This constitutes one problem for principals and another is how to make something positive and constructive of the breakdown of authoritarianism both as it affects students and staff. Perhaps the working more closely with the community will help because community involvement is the second big implication of the social revolution for schools.

Conant has described some of our big secondary schools as "concrete fortresses" keeping the community at bay and has used the phrase "in the community but not of it."

All this is changing and you are all aware of how the schools in Harlem now appear to be coming true community schools by means of the involvement of the mothers in the actual classroom program.

In Toronto, we have attempted to solve the problem by the use of a community team in our Kensington area and by the development of a special Task Force to co-ordinate efforts of community groups, citizens' groups and the work of the agencies, and so on.

The third implication of the revolution is the change in the instructional process. The age of the common graded school appears to be just about at an end and with it the disappearance of mass, formal instruction based on rote learning. Ever since Binet we've been talking about individual differences but never known how to solve the matter. Contract plans, laboratory plans, streaming, tracking and grouping all proved relatively ineffective. Now the solution appears to be in sight, individual prescriptive programs, programmed learning, CAI, the use of computers to keep track of pupil progress and mastery, and the introduction of adult personnel as assistants or para professionals--all seem to be coming together to make the solution to the problem of individual progress a likelihood in our time.

The topic of this paper is Special Education and the Social Revolution and so far I've said nothing about Special Education. My reason of course has been that much of what is happening today in Special Education can only be fully understood if viewed in the context of the wider field of general education and in the context of the overall social revolution. The chief trends in our field are an end to Special Education as a separate, segregated part of education and an end to fragmentation and the piece-meal approach in Special Education programming.

The opposition to the separated, segregated aspect of Social Education programs has arisen partly because of the stigma supposedly attached to special classes and schools (and this is ready grist for the mill of the social activists) and partly because many of the segregated programs have proven to be much less effective than we had hoped and expected.

An example in my home town is the Opportunity Classes or Special Classes in the elementary schools for the educable mentally retarded. In some sections of our community, these classes have suddenly come in to great disrepute. The daily press criticizes them, university protest groups revile them, parent groups appear before the Board to complain about them and special interest groups like the local chapter of the Association for Children with Learning disabilities calls them "an educational no man's land." One could get pretty upset by this if one didn't realize that although there are some grounds for protest the whole question has been caught up in the protest movement, the social unrest of the times.

There is, of course, the "grounds for protest" and it's my contention that we in Special Education have been too complacent and too slow to change and up-date the program of the traditional classes or EMR's. In Toronto we are now meeting the challenge in a number of ways, the chief of which is the returning of many of the children of Opportunity Classes to regular grades while providing them with the special help in what we call a withdrawal or resource room type of service. We have also abolished the term "Opportunity Class" and appointed a special Task Force to make an intensive study of the problem and submit recommendations.

Another of our Toronto programs that's caught up in almost continual public furor is the program for the hearing handicapped. I don't need to go into detail here--the pattern is much the same as that described above, and is once again entangled with all the general protest and activism of the times. Once again a number of varied measures have been taken. The first of these is an on-going liaison with the otolaryngology department of our children's hospital so that deaf infants and children are known to us as soon as they are identified as having a hearing handicap. The decentralization of our program out of the day school for the deaf, the establishment of a follow-up service and plans for the purchase of a group home for parent education purposes are other steps taken to combat fragmentation of service and to more closely involve the community.

These two examples will serve to indicate how traditional special education programs must change to meet the challenge of the times. Besides combating fragmentation and segregation, the special education program of tomorrow must upgrade standards by using the most up-to-date and refined methods of diagnosis and of prescriptive teaching. This makes for rigid adherance to high professional standards and improved teacher education. It involves the kind of special education programming that keeps pupils in the regular stream and gives increased attention to cultural and artistic development for the handicapped. Only in these ways will special education be able to meet the protests and criticism of the social revolution of our times and become completely acceptable to the community of which it is a part.

My message this evening has really been an effort to set the stage in a general way for this conference. We are well into a social revolution that is shaking western civilization to its roots and part of it is a revolution in education. Does it depress you or excite you? If you're a true member of the space age, the

age of Aquarius, you'll be involved, caught up, excited. But if you're worried, depressed and pessimistic about it all, remember the old proverb, "You can't improve the future without disturbing the present." Let's ride with the wave of change, let the boat rock and maybe help keep the balance and even steer it a bit. The discussions and deliberations of this Northwest Regional Conference should bring us a little closer to our goal.